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NOTES ON GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION

Serpentes, Colubridae, *Taeniophallus poecilopogon* (Cope, 1863): Rediscovery in Corrientes, Argentina, and natural history

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Taeniophallus poecilopogon (Cope, 1863) is a non aggressive diurnal species that lives in open habitats searching refuge under rocks (Carreira et al. 2005). It occurs in southern Brazil (Santa Catarina and Rio Grande do Sul states), Uruguay, northeastern Argentina, and southeastern Paraguay (Di-Bernardo 1992). In Argentina it was mentioned from provinces of Buenos Aires, Corrientes, Entre Ríos and Misiones (Giraudo and Scrocchi 2002). However, according to the literature, *T. poecilopogon* is only represented by two specimens, one of them without precise locality (Di-Bernardo and Lema 1987; Williams and Francini 1991; Di-Bernardo 1992; Cei 1993; Giraudo 2001; Giraudo and Scrocchi 2002). One specimen is housed in *Museo Argentino de Ciencias Naturales Bernardino Rivadavia*, Buenos Aires (MACN) without collection number and locality referred as "Argentina". According to Giraudo (2001) this individual probably corresponds to the specimen cited from Misiones by Koslowsky (1898) and Série (1936). The other one specimen is deposited in the Museum of Zoology, University of Torino (MZUT-R 819) from Las Flores, Buenos Aires (Cei 1993). Di-Bernardo and Lema (1987) stated that Jan and Sordelli (1866) illustrated a specimen from Buenos Aires and it would correspond to the individual from Las Flores. According to the above exposed, no vouchers are known from provinces of Corrientes and Entre Ríos, and about 110 years have passed without new records of *T. poecilopogon* from Argentina.

Herein, we report the first record of *Taeniophallus poecilopogon* from province of Corrientes, Argentina, with voucher specimen, and present information about diet, parasitism and habitat.

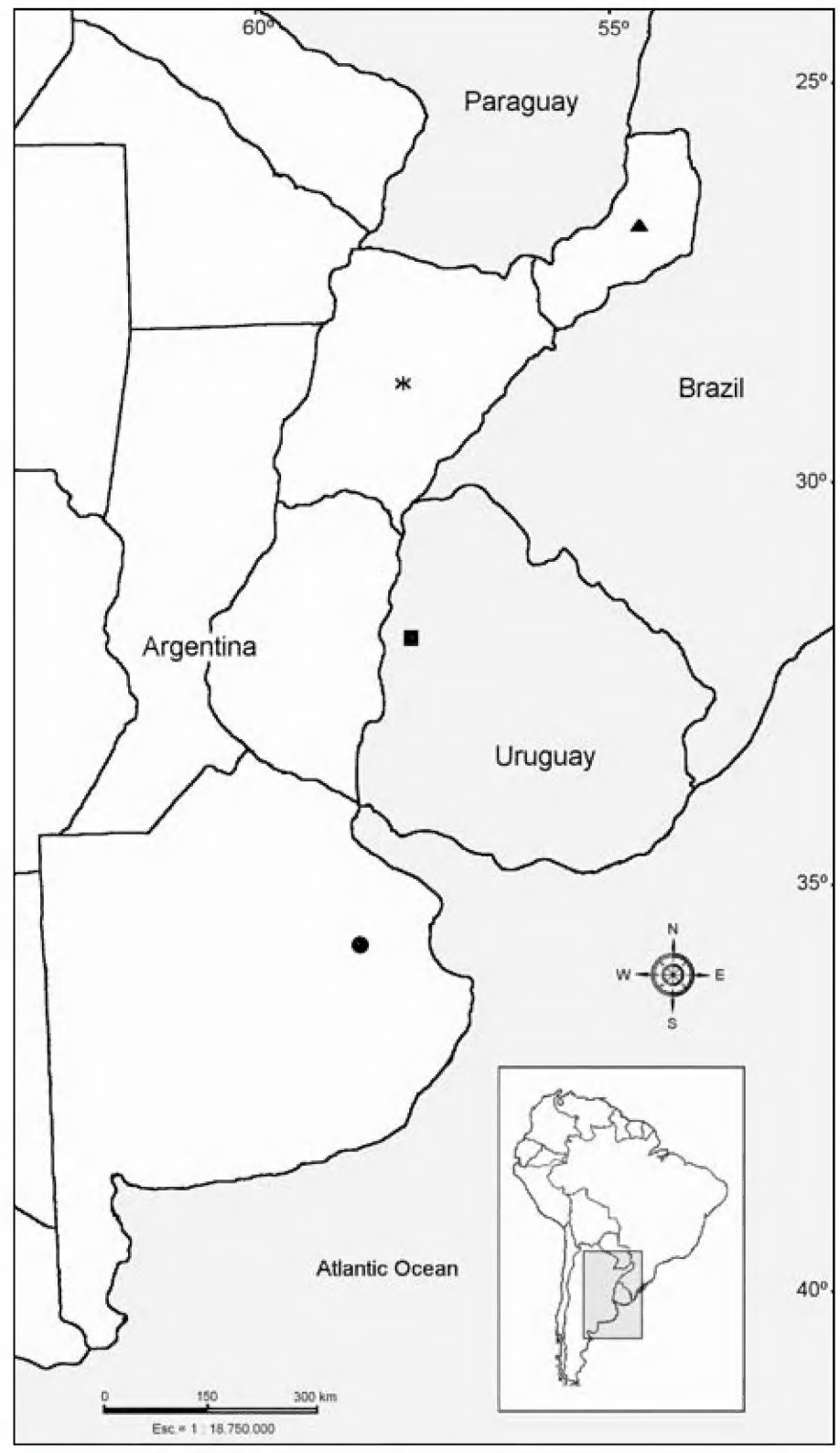

Figure 1. Geographic distribution of *Taeniophallus poecilopogon* in Argentina. Asterisk, new record,province of Corrientes; circles, historical record after Cei (1993); triangle, province of Misiones (without precise locality). Also, square, type locality, Paysandú, Uruguay (Di-Bernardo and Lema 1987).

Figure 2. Dorsal (A) and ventral (B) views of *Taeniophallus poecilopogon,* adult female (UNNEC 10148) from the province of Corrientes, Argentina.

On 2 September 2008, one specimen of *Taeniophallus poecilopogon* was found dead by the authors on the *Ruta Provincial N° 40* (28°41'23" S, 57°26'01" W; ca. 65 m). The area corresponds to the *Reserva Natural Provincial Iberá*, 40 Km south of the city of Colonia Carlos Pellegrini, province of Corrientes, Argentina (Figure 1). Voucher specimen is housed in the *Colección Herpetólogica de la Universidad Nacional del Nordeste*, Corrientes, Argentina (UNNEC 10148).

Because to the scarce records of *Taeniophallus poecilopogon* from Argentina we offer a detailed description of the collected specimen (Figure 2). It was an adult female with 462 mm of total length and 122 mm of tail (26.4 % of the total length). Rostral wider than high. Trapezoidal internasals wider than high. Pentagonal prefrontals, about as wide as long, and larger than internasals. Pentagonal frontal, longer than wide, slightly longer than supraoculars and shorter than parietals. The frontal scale is longer than the distance from its anterior edge to the top of snout. Nasals divided. Squarish loreal in contact with second supralabial; preocular 1-1; postoculars 2-2, temporals 1+2/1+2; supralabials 7-7, 3th and 4th entering the orbit; infralabials 8-8; two pairs of genials, the first pair smaller; 1th to 4th infralabials in contact with the first genial, and 5th infralabial in contact with the second genial. Body scales smooth, without apical pits, in 17 rows, and without reduction; ventrals 164; gulars 2-2, much longer than wide; cloacal scales divided; subcaudals 73, in two rows. Prediastemal maxillary teeth, followed by 2 fangs.

The coloration is similar to the specimen housed in the MACN from "Argentina" described by Giraudo (2001). However, we find some differences. The individual collected by us (UNNEC 10148) has a white spot in the parietals near of their internal edge. We did not observed white lines edging the dark vertebral stripe neither the white line of internal half of the paravertebral scales; instead of this, we observed a light brown paravertebral stripe with numerous small black spots (Figure 3). Also, the slightly red longitudinal line was in the sixth dorsal row, and not in the fifth row.

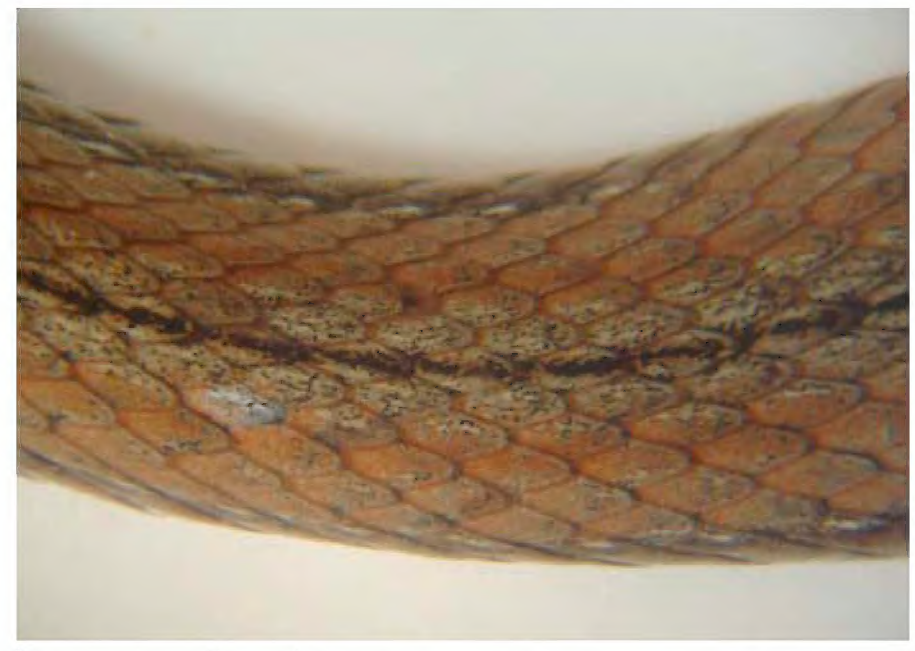

Figure 3. Dorsal coloration pattern of *Taeniophallus poecilopogon* from the province of Corrientes, Argentina. UNNEC 10148.

Diet: The analysis of the stomach and intestinal contents revealed remains of the tegument, forelimbs, and hind limbs of *Dendropsophus* sp. (Anura: Hylidae).

Parasites: the body cavity, esophagus, stomach, small and large intestines were opened and searched for parasites under a dissecting microscope. Two cestodes and seven nematodes in small intestine were record. Seven adult and nine larvae worms not identified were also found.Habitat: the specimen was found in *Reserva Natural Provincial Iberá*, in an area where both protected and livestock production grasslands are

adjacent (Figure 4). This zone belongs to the district of Ñandubay, biogeographic province of Espinal (Cabrera 1976). In this district occur woodlands, palm groves, grasslands and scrubland.

Echinanthera (including part of *Taeniophallus*) was mentioned as a typical genus of woodlands (Di-Bernando and Lema 1987) although *Taeniophallus poecilopogon* is associated mainly to Pampeana and Espinal biogeographic provinces (Giraudo and Scrocchi 2002) and it would be the species of *Taeniophallus* with more austral distribution (Giraudo 2001).

Figure 4. Habitats of *Taeniophallus poecilopogon* in the province of Corrientes, Argentina. A) Protected grasslands; B) Livestock production grasslands.

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